

'NCIS' Actress Pauley Perrette Visits the Real NCIS

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WASHINGTON -- TV met reality Sept. 30 when actress Pauley Perrette from "NCIS," CBS' hit TV series, visited the real Naval Criminal Investigative Service's (NCIS) headquarters in Washington.

The "NCIS" show portrays the experiences of Special Agent Leroy Jethro Gibbs, played by actor Mark Harmon, and his team of agents as they attempt to solve crimes involving members of the U.S. Navy and Marines and their families.

The real NCIS enjoys a healthy relationship with the TV show. NCIS shares story lines with the show's writers and helps out with accuracy and technical information. Leon Carroll, a retired 23-year veteran NCIS special agent, consults as a technical advisor for the show.

"Like the real NCIS, there are no two days that are ever alike," said Carroll about his experiences on the set. "I discuss the set-up of crime scenes, interrogations and search and seizure processes with the set director...I work with the actors on how NCIS agents say and do things, especially the many acronyms that are used in the military. I will normally get a couple of calls a day from the writers or researchers about NCIS policy to assist them when writing their scripts."

Perrette, who plays forensics specialist Abby Scuito, said that the show could not be done without NCIS' input.

A camera crew from "Entertainment Tonight," along with representatives from the Department of Defense media and the Naval Media Center, escorted Perrette as she toured NCIS headquarters. One of her stops was the armory where NCIS keeps its gear and weapons. There, Equipment Specialist Darlene Proctor, who is one of only two female armorers in federal law enforcement today, helped Perrette experience the weight of wearing a vest with ceramic plates, a Kevlar helmet, a thigh holster, and a Colt M-16A2 automatic rifle - items routinely worn and used by real NCIS agents currently deployed in war zones like Iraq and Afghanistan.

During her visit, Perrette also toured the Multiple Threat Alert Center (MTAC) and spoke with NCIS Director David Brant.

"The show represents unprecedented publicity for our agency. NCIS is now a household name to millions of Americans," said Brant, who visited the "NCIS" set in 2003.

Perrette, who studied for a master's degree in criminology, was excited to see Dawn Sorenson, the NCIS Regional Forensic Lab director and real-life counterpart to Perrette's character, Abby.

Sorenson told her, "You make us all look good, so we're grateful."

The TV show and the real NCIS have a great deal of admiration for each other. When NCIS employees praised the show, Perrette replied, "We're just trying to do you guys proud."

Mark Harmon also expressed his respect for NCIS when he said on "Entertainment Tonight" preceding a recent "NCIS" show, "These guys are at the forefront. They're at the tip of the spear...It's a war front, and there's an agency out there trying to make a difference and doing a very, very difficult job worldwide."